USDLA Honors PHTN, McDowell and Atkinson
for Outstanding Achievements

Washington, D.C. April 30, 2003 – The **United States Distance Learning Association (USDLA)** presented its 2003 Distance Learning Awards at a ceremony held in conjunction with the Learning and Training Week Conference and Expo in Washington, D.C.   CDC took top honors over all government   submissions by winning the three awards for excellence: Programming, Teaching and Outstanding Individual Achievement..

The Award for **EXCELLENCE in DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMMING - Government** was presented to the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Public Health Training Network (PHTN) and its series, "*CDC Responds.".**

The Award for   **EXCELLENCE in DISTANCE LEARNING TEACHING – Government** was presented to **William L. Atkinson, M.D.,** Medical Epidemiologist with the National Immunization Program, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services.

The Award for **MOST OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT BY AN INDIVIDUAL – Government** was presented to   **Dennis L. McDowell,** Director, Professional Development & Evaluation Division, Public Health Practice Program Office, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services.

The annual Awards Program was created to acknowledge major accomplishments in distance learning and to highlight those instructors, programs, and distance learning professionals who have achieved excellence in the field.

The three CDC winners received the awards accompanied by the following citations.:

Excellence in Distance Learning Programming recognizes organization that have designed and delivered an outstanding and comprehensive distance learning program service. Recipients have regional, multi-state and international comprehensive programming, include courses from diverse disciplines.

Citation: The Public Health Training Network is a recognized leader in providing award winning educational programs to health care professionals and the public health care community throughout the world. This past year, through a blended learning approach that encompassed both satellite and online technologies, the PHTN provided critical health care training and continuing education to more than 80,000 health care professionals. Since September 11, 2001, the PHTN has supported homeland security through its "CDC Responds" Series, providing bioterrorism, epidemiology, and disaster preparedness courses to local and state agencies that resulted in over 2.5 million individuals trained. Dennis McDowell, Director of PHTN with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention accepted the award.

Excellence in Distance Learning Teaching recognizes an outstanding individual who has creatively utilized the medium to inspire learning in a given subject. The recipients have all taught a course, series, or unit in a distance learning format with an imaginative approach to the material taught, well designed visuals and demonstrated rapport with the program's participants.

Citation: Dr. Atkinson's innovative use of technology has resulted in a blended learning approach, integrating the use of satellite, web-based, and computer based technologies to teach the nations' health workforce about the many vital and emergent trends in the field of immunization. Dr. Atkinson's program typically exceeds an enrollment of 10,000, largely due to his sincere presence, teaching style, dedication, and interaction with his learners accomplished through live audio, e-mail, and chat rooms.

Most Outstanding Achievement by an Individual recognizes an individual who demonstrates extraordinary achievements through distance learning. They have demonstrated achievement in areas that include research and writing as well as leadership activities in regional, national and international presentations and speeches; recognition by and service to education, technology and distance learning organizations; and have engaged in activities that have contributed to a better understanding of distance learning, resulting in cooperative efforts with other organization or improvement in distance learning methodologies.

Citation: Mr. Dennis McDowell distinguished himself by working extensively with states, universities, and professional organizations in forging alliances to develop distance learning technologies that would serve the professional health care community. Through his leadership and vision, Mr. McDowell, recognized the need to develop a distance learning network that would ensure the timely distribution of CDC courses to the public

health care community. His vision was realized with creation of the Public Health Training Network, one of the most successful and notable distance learning networks in the country.

USDLA Awards Committee

The 2003 Distance Learning Awards were presented by the USDLA Awards Committee Members and include Dr. Deborah Harrison, TANDBERG, Mr. Donald S. Lake, Los Angeles County Office of Education and Dr. Ray Steele, Ball State University.

Recognized leaders in the field of distance learning judged the nominations submitted to USDLA and worked in teams of three to review and evaluate submissions in each of distance learning categories.

2003 USDLA Distance Learning Awards Judges:

- Ms. Jennifer Rees, The University of Texas System, UT TeleCampus
- Dr. Allan W. Gray, Purdue University
- Mr. William A. Eastham, Jr., CQA, Windwalker Corporation
- Ms. Mary Kay Stewart, StarNet, Region 20 Education Service Center
- Mr. William A. Eastham, Jr., CQA, Vice President, Windwalker Corporation
- Mr. Louis Stricoff, MediaMedia
- Mr. John H. Southworth, Pan-Pacific Distance Learning Association
- Dr. Janet McMahill, Drake University School of Education
- Ms. Arlene Krebs, Cal State University, Monterey Bay
- Mr. John Tierney, DMR Central Office, Strategic Leadership Center
- Dr. Jolly Holden, USDLA Chairman Emeritus
- Dr. Philip J.-L. Westfall, Air Force Institute for Advanced Distributed Learning/DB
- Mr. Chris Robbins, Arkansas School for Mathematics and Sciences
- Ms. Toni Pickle, Pioneer Telephone Cooperative, Inc.